

GREECE EAGER FOR WAR.

FIERY OUTBURSTS OF PATRIOTISM
AGAINST THE TURK.

Stirring scenes on the Greek-Turkish frontier in Thessaly—Gentlemen of the Press—The Greek Press—A Description of a Battle Between Greeks and Moslems.

LONDON, March 19.—Although war has not been declared in the East, the newspapers of England and the Continent are already filled with "war correspondence." The letters and telegrams "from the front" bristle with all the vernacular of war. The scenes which they describe on the Greek-Turkish frontier in Thessaly are of the sort which Europe has not read about since Sedan. The story is beginning to stir the sluggish blood of Europe, quite apart from the interest and direct concern that everybody now feels in the great crisis, which we are told persistently by the rulers of all the powers involves the peace of almost the whole world. It, for one, does not accept this gloomy assumption that war between Greece and Turkey means War Universal and almost the doom of Christendom. Nevertheless, the splendid incarnation of the spirit of war which the Greek nation is now displaying is as surely the most dramatic and the most inspiring spectacle the world has seen in this generation. It is not going to disappear without leaving its mark upon the history of the age.

I propose to give, in place of any dry analysis of the political features of the situation which I might make, a few sketches of the physical and human nature elements in the Greek and Turkish crisis, taken from the great mass of material which has been put before the English public this week. First, then, as to the Greeks themselves. The impression prevails, I believe, that the modern Greek is more phlegmatic than most of the Eastern races. Heed, then, that the account from Henry Norman's description of a twenty-four hours' voyage from the Piræus to Volo en route to the frontier on a little steamer of 600 tons, which carried no fewer than 900 recruits: "This is the most inflammable human material that has ever come within my range. I have never smoked a cigar from any Greek's mouth, the rim of an open barrel of powder, but if I had my feelings would have been those with which I looked all the afternoon on this uniformed and ununiformed crowd of Greek soldiers bound for the edge of the Turkish empire. At any moment a spark would have set it ablaze, and nothing in the world could have stopped it. At one time a specially stirring song so excited the exultation that they seized their rifles and began firing in the air. I bobbed this way and that as the muzzle of the gun pointed in my direction while their owners jammed cartridges into the breech, and it was easy to see from the gentle, persuasive manner in which the sergeant-for a man and a day, and a hand on his shoulder, argued with him, that they well knew how vain would be a more imperative form of control.

"At another moment I thought the explosion had come. A sudden whirpool formed in the crowd, savage shouts from angry breasts half a dozen men were at each others' throats. Instantly the two combatant officers leaped from the bridge and dashed recklessly through the packed mass to the scene. They only just got there in time, for as their braided caps reached the vortex of the human maelstrom a huge naked cavalry sabre was flashing high in the air. They sprang upon the chief offender and held him down while they quickly rated him, but it was several minutes before the passions had cooled past danger point. Given these fiery natures, pent up in these solid bodies, boiling with patriotism, loathing the Turk, determined this time to fight the traditional enemy, convinced beforehand that it will be treachery on the part of their rulers to prevent them, and the closeness of the respective outposts on the frontier as it has been described to me, and no prophet is needed to foresee a certain explosion, impossible to suppress if the Greeks fail much longer to recognize the truth about Greek national feeling while wasting time in denouncing the bluster of Athens. As I telegraphed you two days ago, the Greek Government can and will control the volcano for a little while longer, but it must be a very little while. I have glanced into the crater of that volcano to-day, and the lava streams are rising fast."

There is no need to add to the evidence of the genuineness of the martial spirit among the Greeks. The testimony comes alike from those who sympathize with them in their enthusiasm and those who do not. Thus the correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, who severely condemns the Greek policy, writes from near the frontier in Thessaly:

"I do not desire to be an alarmist, but it is right that the situation here should be known. The further I journey the stronger grows my personal conviction that Greece will fight, and perhaps win. The enthusiasm is extraordinary. "Uniformed volunteers with black alouched hats as a distinguishing headpiece, and irregularly sturdy shepherds as a rule, with well-filled bandoliers and new Gras rifles, which they toy with lovingly—are all hurrying to the front."

"My hotel proprietor in Larissa said to me in Italian, 'When it is necessary I shall go to the front myself, and my young son with me, pointing as he spoke to a raw lad of 17 beside him. The very barber in Trikhalá, on hearing, during his tonsorial operations on my head, that I was off to the front, set out for glasses, filled them with generous liquor, and drank with me to the health of England and Greece. I relate these small incidents as a proof of my statement that the Greeks are not bluffing, but are in grim, deadly earnest."

Turning now to the actual military situation on the frontier in Thessaly, there is much that is interesting and significant. The Greek headquarters are at Larissa, which is described by the *Daily Telegraph* as follows:

"Larissa preserves many aspects of a Mussulman town, such as minarets, mosques, mud-walled houses, the latter having very low arched doorways and overhanging floors, like those seen in Cairo and other Oriental towns. These, however, are at Larissa, which is a European city, for the lake is keen and bracing and the streets are thronged with soldiers, of whom 40,000 are here, infantry, artillery, and cavalry. The extensive barracks are full of troops, and the town also, though large, is fairly filled with men in uniform. It is the sight to see soldiers thronging the wide streets, wine shops, and restaurants, eating, drinking, smoking, chatting, and singing war songs. Many restaurants have quaint interiors, or open galleries indoors, where groups of private gentry round tables, smoking merry, though they risk a tumbler of a dozen feet to the front. With the Greeks and dirt I should have said that you can also see in Larissa peasants, men and women, wearing the belated dress of Eastern Mohammedanism. The majority of the mosques are fallen into decay, their Byzantine columns being broken and their ornate domes cracked. The tawdry minarets alone keep most of their grace, and crows and vultures, now replace the former muezzins and Turkish worshippers.

"Larissa, although an important town, is without strategic works or means of defence, such as one accustomed to European frontier towns might expect to find near the head of a plain. Little Strymon, which has been made a water to the highlands, which rise less than a dozen miles away. Here is a panorama as grand as any of those displayed by the Alps, Andes, or Himalayas. Now winter keeps his sway upon the mountains running and winding northward, and to the east is the lofty Pindus, that finds the Aegean Sea under the base of Olympus. Around is an amphitheatre of hills, the frontiers of Greece and Turkey, every lower peak capped with small military posts, black houses, and forts, substantially built of stone, good enough against

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"The night of the 21st of March was a making itself felt on the shadowless stretch of broken land between the villages and the city. Thick turbulent warfare gathered in folds corners and along the road, their talk a shade less inaudible than silence, their gestures few but drastically significant, their looks provoked and ferocious. All their interest was centered in the war, and they were all the while looking toward the village, which they finally did, with a loss of about 100 men, and gradually nearing the Christian villages in the neighborhood of which I was standing.

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"The battle went slowly on. Here a shot would be fired, there another, then all at once a whole volley would be discharged into space, whereupon the smoke on the hill grew denser, the excitement of the inactive spectators waxed intense, the fear of the villagers became more and more paralyzing. By 3 o'clock the Moslems had suffered severely, and their party had got split up into two unequal bodies, one of which was considerably ahead of the other. The Christians evidently noticed this, and took their measures accordingly; concentrating their fire upon the smaller detachment, they finally rendered all advance impossible, and with a little knowledge of tactics, might have been able to place bullets flew about in all directions into and over the village, and I picked up some near the spot where I stood. The last shot of the battle was made by one of the Moslems, who, having given up the idea of regaining the city, and cautiously endeavoring to get back to the mountain on the hill, which they finally did, with a loss of about 100 men, and gradually nearing the Christian villages in the neighborhood of which I was standing.

"Until 2 o'clock on that delightful summer Sunday these bands of grimy heroes with flags and banners, dead and dying, children and women, moved slowly cityward, along the dazzling white road, from which columns of white smoke, although not the lightest leaf of the rare shrub and still rarer trees quivered to the passing breeze. Once only the mellowed music of the bells of the Capuchin convent floated on the fragrant air across hill and dale; and, during the entire day, the same birds sang and soared toward the blue ether, in one ecstatic hymn of thanksgiving for inextinguishable blessings which their human fellow creatures seemed probable only of marriage.

JOHN & JAMES DOBSON,

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Christians on the heights, and, worse still, there were numerous Christians in three little villages below, just outside of Cana, the white houses of which contrasted very prettily with the gray-green foliage of the olive groves. All these villages would surely see and these ever-wakeful ears would certainly hear some signs of the march of the relief party. The risk, however, had to be run. Six hundred stalwart Moslems, including regular soldiers and bloodthirsty-looking volunteers, set out accordingly in the dead of the night, and took the least frequented route to Malaxa. In due time they arrived at their destination without a mishap and delivered the sacks of flour, the biscuits, oranges, and other victuals to their long-suffering friends, who could scarcely suppress their jubilation.

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